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long as Molière ridiculed the foibles of humanity, Louis could but rejoice. It must have pleased him to have his whimpering marquesses held up to scorn. But when with 'Tartuffe' the mighty fabric of the church was shaken, the King was compelled to protest, for the church was the mainstay of his realm. And so it happened, for political rather than personal reasons that Louis withdrew his public support from Molière after 1669.

Mr. Taylor has the usual Saxon preference for the 'Misanthrope,' which to him represents the apogee of Molière's power. However excellent this play may be, it is questionable whether Molière's power ever waned; in the opinion of many he died in his intellectual prime. It is worth noting also that M. Coquelin, whom Mr. Taylor cites in another connection, places 'Don Juan' at the head of the poet's plays (*International Quarterly*, 1903, pages 60 ff.). Certainly the latter comedy has something Shakespearian in its breadth and scope, without lacking any of its creator's sense of reality. M. Coquelin further makes clear Don Juan's similarity to Richard III—the great difference being that Don Juan's weapon is impertinence and that Richard's is irony. This trait explains Don Juan's pretended hypocrisy, the stumbling-block of so many Molière commentators, with whom Mr. Taylor here allies himself. In addition, the analogy of 'Tartuffe' and the 'Malade Imaginaire,' which Mr. Taylor mentions, is upheld by a comparison of Argan with Organ, the former of whom seeks to insure the welfare of his body, the latter that of his soul as well,—both being types of extreme selfishness.

From minor errors of detail the book is singularly free. M. Abel Lefranc² has recently made out a good case for dating the 'Étourdi' in 1655, instead of 1653 as Mr. Taylor argues. The Arnauld d'Andilly mentioned on page 213 is evidently a slip for Antoine Arnauld, who was the true leader of the Port-Royalists. The Bibliography, which contains only works that had been specially consulted in preparation of the book, should, it seems, have included: Coquelin's essay mentioned above, Brunetière's article³ on the

philosophy of Molière, Weiss's lectures⁴ on him, and Stapfer's 'Molière et Shakespeare'⁵—all of which are of general interest and value.

On the whole, the work is very well done, down to the minor details of execution. In this the biographer, the illustrator and the printer all had a share. Professor Crane, whose pupil Mr. Taylor was, contributes an interesting introduction. In closing, be it said that the blank-verse translations of Mr. Taylor are the best rendering we have of Molière in English. Let us hope that he will see fit to complete them, so that English literature may permanently possess the masterpieces of the greatest modern comic genius.

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Molière, by MR. H. C. CHATFIELD-TAYLOR.

Duffield and Company, New York, 1906. xxv and 446 pages.

To many a reader of this *Life of Molière* will undoubtedly come the question which occurred to the present writer: Why did not some *Fachmann* write this book? Whatever the answer to this question may be, here is a great opportunity lost, for the work is so written that it may well be called definitive.

The author's aim has been "to tell the story of Molière's life to English readers . . . to interpret Molière's life by his plays and his plays by his life, rather than write an exhaustive criticism of his dramatic works." It is true, the book is not an attempt to catalogue and analyse fully the Italian, Spanish, or Latin sources of all the plays that lend themselves to this treatment. Faithful to the object he set out to attain, the author does not wander very far from Molière's life. Yet a deal of this source-discussion is scattered through the book. Some of the foreign sources have been only cursorily indicated, but there is enough information on this subject given to suit all the purposes of the ordinary seminar work in Molière. Besides, there is exhaustive criticism in more than

² *Revue des Cours et Conférences*, 15th year, 1st series, 1906.

³ In his *Études crit. sur l'histoire de la littérature française*, 4e ser., 1891, pp. 179-242.

⁴ Paris, 1900 (Calmann Levy).

⁵ 5th ed., Paris, 1905.

one instance, notably in the discussion of *Les Précieuses ridicules*, *L'École des femmes*, *Don Juan*, *Le Tartuffe*, *Le Misanthrope*, and the group of plays satirising the physicians. A practically complete bibliography, a chronology, and an index coöperate in making a scholarly work of unusual merit and usefulness.

The author divides Molière's plays into five groups, based upon the manner in which "the poet's muse was affected by his life." The Italian period includes his firstlings, only four of which have been preserved, viz. : *La Jalousie du Barbouillé*, *Le Médecin volant*, *L'Etourdi* and *Le Dépit amoureux*. In the "Gallic" group he is no longer bound by Italian fetters. Now he needs "only to study society," and he produces *Sganarelle*, *Les Précieuses ridicules*, *L'École des maris*, *L'École des femmes*, and *Le Médecin malgré lui*. His success in amusing the King brings forth such comedies as *Les Fâcheux*, *Le Mariage forcé*, *L'Impromptu de Versailles*, *Le Favori*, *La Princesse d'Elide*, *Mélicerte*, *Le Sicilien*, *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, *Les Amants magnifiques*, *Psyché* and *La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas*, which the author classes under the heading of "time-serving." The plays in which Molière seriously attacks the foibles of contemporary society are called "militant" and include *Le Tartuffe*, *Le Misanthrope*, *L'Amour médecin* and *Le Malade imaginaire*, while such works as *Amphitryon*, *George Dandin*, *L'Avare*, *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*, *Les Fourberies de Scapin* and *Les Femmes savantes*, written for business reasons, are classed as "histrionic."

This classification is intimately connected with the author's object as before stated. In interpreting Molière's life by his plays and his plays by his life, Mr. Chatfield-Taylor appears to develop the thesis that Molière, the greatest author of comedy, brought to bear upon his most objective of arts a most subjective nature, and that he succeeds best where a comedy is the direct expression of his subjectivity. In other words, *Les Précieuses ridicules*, *L'École des maris*, *L'École des femmes*, *Le Tartuffe*, *Le Misanthrope* and some of his doctor-plays contain Molière's most notable work. That this subjectivity takes the form of polemics upon a broad scale is a corollary, for, according to the author's definition, comedy is criticism in lighter vein and in dramatic form of the foibles of contemporary society. When his polemics stoops to "Billingsgate warfare," as in

La Critique de l'école des femmes and in *L'Impromptu de Versailles*, the result is poor comedy. Where, as in *L'Avare* and *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*, the foundation of the personal experience is lacking, we admire Molière's consummate art, his perfect workmanship, but our hearts are not stirred, we are only amused.

A distinct feature of the book is the sympathy, as well as the faithful accuracy with which the intimate life of Molière is portrayed. Trollope's *Life of Molière*, accurate and brimful of facts as it is, lacks this sympathetic, this literary touch. It is a book of reference. But Mr. Chatfield-Taylor's work, while possessing the merits of Trollope's *Molière*, is readable from beginning to end. Here and there are touches of humour and pathos which can come only from one who is endowed with the literary instinct. Any one reading Chapter XVIII cannot help being impressed with the dramatic value of Molière's life, of all life. The metrical translations of illustrative passages show excellent mastery over that most subtle of poetic forms, blank verse.

Great pains have been taken to make the illustrations historically exact. The artist, Jacques Onfroy de Bréville (JoB), examined the original documents and plates contained in the archives of the *Comédie française*, the *Bibliothèque nationale*, etc. The costumes of the *Comédie française* and the *Théâtre de l'Odéon* were placed at his disposal. The famous *fauteuil de Molière* and the interior of Gély's barbershop have for the first time been reproduced together. For the drawing representing Molière and the poet Bellocq making the King's bed at Versailles the original architect's drawing in the *Estampes nationales* was used, because the room itself was considerably altered in 1701. In the sketch depicting Armande Béjart in Molière's room, the furniture and effects have been reproduced from the description given in the inventory of the poet's property, made a few weeks after his death.

For his Molière scholarship Mr. Chatfield-Taylor has already been recognised in France, where he has been made *Officier de l'Instruction Publique*¹ and given the cross of the *Légion d'hon-*

¹ Spain and Portugal had already rewarded the author for his studies of Spanish life with the decorations, respectively, of "Chevalier, Order of Isabella the Catholic" and "Chevalier, Order of St. Iago." His *bagage littéraire* consists of seven novels and many articles in periodicals.

neur. Wherever possible all statements have been verified from first-hand sources. In building the book the author has collected a Molière library not equalled by many college libraries in the United States.

Professor Crane, of Cornell University, has given the work an instructive and appreciative introduction.

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English Literature from the Norman Conquest to Chaucer. By WILLIAM HENRY SCHOFIELD, Ph. D., Professor of Comparative Literature in Harvard University. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1906.

Middle English literature has had to wait a long time for a satisfactory historian. However laudable for the time which produced them may have been the chapters on the subject in Warton's *History of English Poetry*, and however convenient those in Morley's *English Writers*, both works are mainly descriptive, give little aid to an understanding of the subject, and are quite untrustworthy as regards facts. ten Brink's *History of English Literature*, for all its judiciousness, and M. Jusserand's *Literary History of the English People*, for all its charm, are neither exhaustive nor otherwise adequate to the needs of the special student or the capable general reader. Therefore, Professor Schofield's book, while in no sense a great one and necessarily not a final one, is even more indispensable than it is excellent.

The arrangement of the book is the feature which most obviously calls for comment. Following the example of the late Gaston Paris and of other French writers, the author has divided his material not chronologically but according to its literary *genres* or subject-matter. He has even improved, if one may be permitted to say so, on the arrangement adopted by the great French scholar in his *Littérature Française au Moyen Âge*, by making his own less mechanical. After the introduction come chapters on Anglo-Latin, and

Anglo-Norman and Anglo-French literature, the English language, romance, tales, historical, religious and didactic works, and songs and lyrics, followed by a conclusion, a suggestive chronological table, an excellent working bibliography and a full index.¹ In view of the present state of our knowledge and the prevalent unfamiliarity with mediæval literary categories, such a division of the material was certainly the best, and is one reason why the book will be far more useful than ten Brink's. But the fact should not be disregarded that this is largely an expository, almost a pedagogical, device; that it is untrue to nature and unfair; that it greatly exaggerates what the author calls the static character of mediæval literary types. We may hope that the time will come when the literary history of mediæval England may be written in such a way as will make its intellectual and artistic changes from the twelfth to the fifteenth century nearly as plain as those of any later period. Professor Schofield himself says (p. 24), "Study, however, shows one century developing naturally out of another. From the barbarity of the dark ages to the affectations of the pre-Renaissance epoch is a long but steady progression." He actually does make an attempt (on pp. 28 and 98) at a chronological characterization of the Latin literature of the period. Would it not even have been well, perhaps, if his final chapter had been a chronological retrospect? This would have afforded an admirable prelude to the treatment of Chaucer and his contemporaries, to which all students are looking forward in Dr. Schofield's next volume.

One of the most interesting and illuminating chapters in the book is the introduction, on the conditions under which Middle English literature came into existence; on the linguistic, political, ecclesiastical, and social peculiarities of mediæval England, and on such classes of men, significant for literary history, as the clerks and minstrels. One might suggest that the five-page conclusion, on similar subjects, and the five-page Chapter iv,

¹ The omission here of the romance of *Athelstone* may be noted, however (see p. 275). The suggestion may be made that it would save much fingering of pages, if the reference to the main treatment of each subject were printed in heavy-faced type.